Path to AI.

EUROBIKE 2026 · SALES SUMMIT

AI Recommends the Bike. You Close the Deal.

The New Sales Reality for Bike Retail. The full talk, slide by slide, with the speaker notes for each slide.

YVES SCHLEICH · PATH TO AI · PATH-TO-AI.COM

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AI recommends the bike. You close the deal.

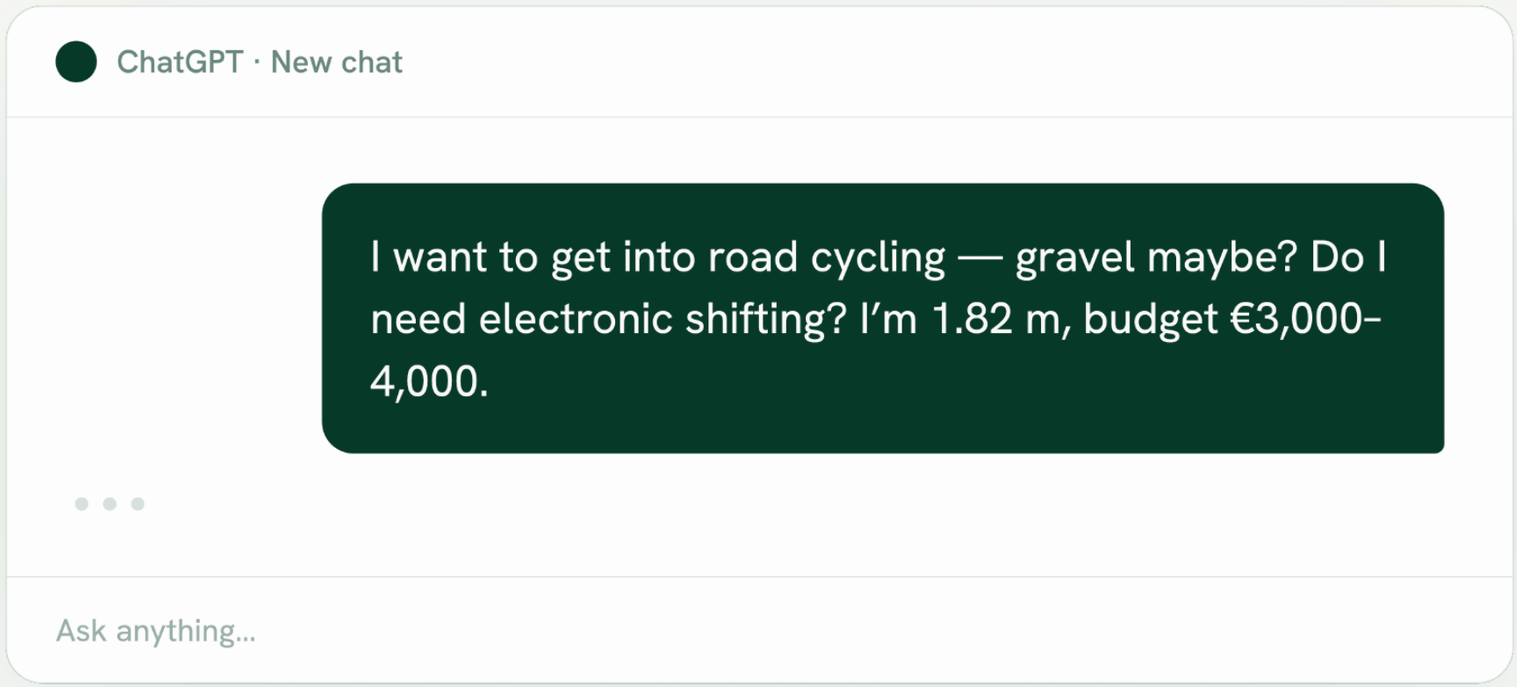
The new sales reality for bike retail.

Yves Schleich

15 minutes + Q&A

Thanks for having me. Two quick promises: I'll keep it short, and there's no hype here, no robots taking over your shop. Just one shift that's already changing how people buy bikes.

A REAL MESSAGE — SENT BEFORE WALKING INTO ANY SHOP



This is the reality today. One of thousands of conversations happening every day. Not with one of your salespeople. With ChatGPT, before this person ever walks into a shop.

WHO I AM

Yves Schleich

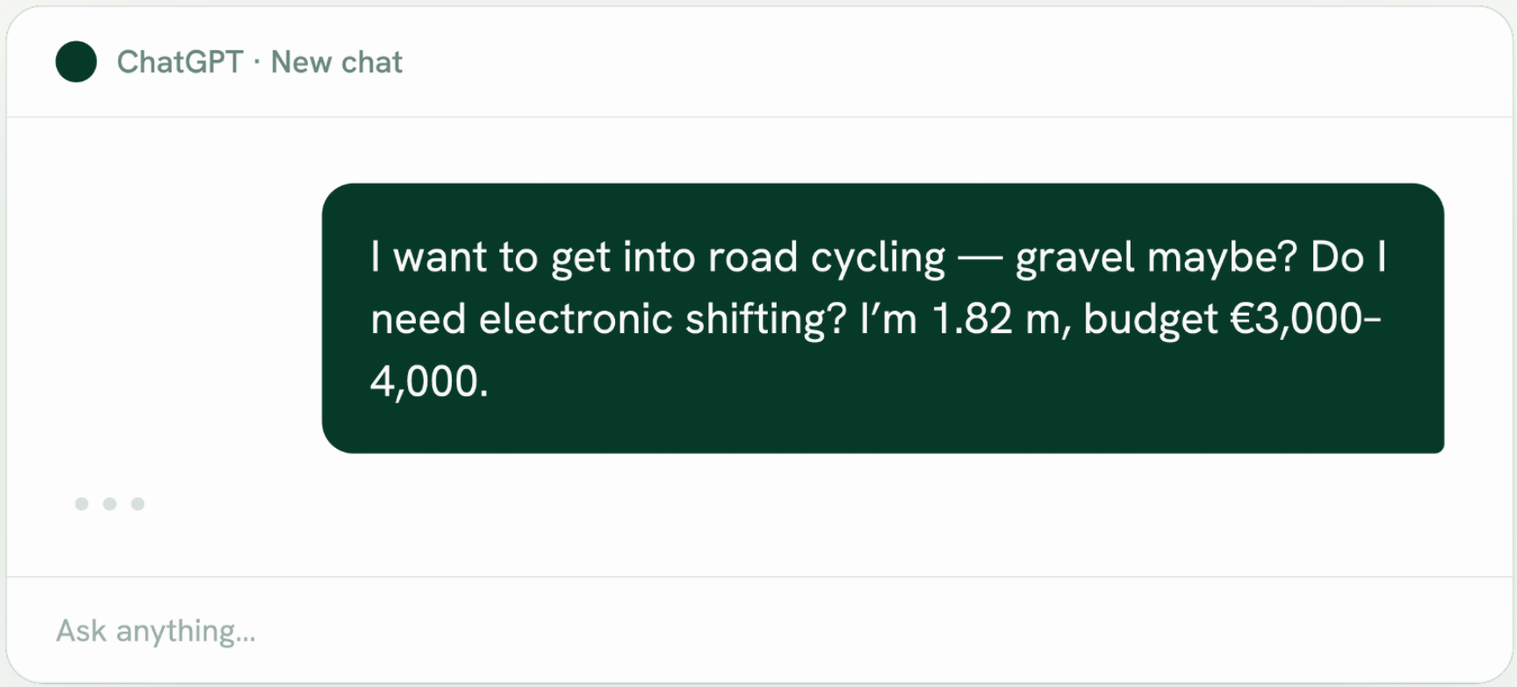
15+ years in e-commerce

- Founded an e-commerce software company
- Helped several companies scale their tech & e-commerce operations
- Led tech & e-commerce — including **KarlvonDrais**, a bike retailer

→ Today: **Path to AI**

I have worked more than two decades in the e-commerce industry. I founded an e-commerce software company, helped several companies scale their tech and e-commerce operations, and led tech and e-commerce at several companies, including KarlvonDrais, a bike retailer based here in Frankfurt. Today, with Path to AI, I get AI into the daily work of e-commerce and retail teams.

A REAL MESSAGE — SENT BEFORE WALKING INTO ANY SHOP



As I said, your customers are now chatting with ChatGPT instead of your salespeople.

THIS IS NOT A PREDICTION

It is already happening.

+393%

AI-driven traffic to retail sites, year over year.

Adobe · Q1 2026

39%

of shoppers have already used AI to shop.

Adobe survey 2026

+42%

higher conversion from AI traffic than regular traffic.

Adobe · March 2026

These aren't browsers — they're buyers who arrive having mostly decided.

And this is not a prediction. Traffic from AI to retail sites is up almost four hundred percent year over year. Nearly four in ten shoppers have already used AI to shop. And the part that matters for sales: that traffic converts better than regular traffic. These are not browsers. They are buyers who arrive having mostly decided.

THE FEAR

“Online will kill the bike shop.”

We’ve heard it for years.

So, does that mean we're back to “Online will kill the bike shop”? We've heard that warning for years. Let's look at what the data actually says.

The journey moved online. The sale did not.

67%

still bought in a physical bike shop.

ZIV market data 2025

64%

research online — then buy offline.

ROPO / webrooming effect

Two thirds of all bikes are still bought locally. And many people research online for one reason: to buy in person with confidence. To test the bike, get fitted, and have a local partner for later. I recently listened to a podcast with the founder and CEO of Bike24, one of the biggest online bike retailers, and even he said most of their money comes from parts and accessories, not from the bikes. And that's where the local shop has the edge: the bike itself, parts paired with real service, and the relationship over time. So take a breath. The journey already moved online. The sale did not. But something did change.

SHIFT ONE

Discovery moved into the chat.

YESTERDAY

Search, filters,
forums, comparisons.

→

TODAY

One sentence.

Online research isn't new. What changed is that it got easier. It used to be search, filters, forums, comparison sites. Research was work, and plenty of people gave up and came to your shop to be advised. Your shop was their research. Now they describe what they want in one sentence and get an answer. And because it got easier, the people doing it changed too.

“

My mother is almost 70.
She uses ChatGPT every day.

The barrier is gone — so everyone starts here.

My mother, for example, is almost seventy. She uses ChatGPT every day. She used to find online research too complicated, so she rarely did it. She'd just go to her local dealer and ask for advice. Not anymore. Now she asks ChatGPT for recommendations, tips, and help. The barrier is gone, so everyone starts here. This is where the buying journey begins now. And that is exactly where the problem starts.

If you're not in the answer, your competitor is.

–25%

Google searches by 2026 · Gartner

70% → <20%

Overlap of Google's top results and AI-cited sources · 5WPR, 2026

So nowadays, people are searching Google almost twenty-five percent less, because they're asking AI instead. The AI doesn't just inform. It recommends where to buy. If your shop is in that answer, you get considered. If it isn't, the AI points them to a competitor, and that customer never walks into your shop. They go to the other one instead. And if you think your Google ranking has you covered, it doesn't. Being number one on Google used to mean the AI quoted you too. That overlap fell from seventy percent to under twenty. So even if you're on Google's first page today, that doesn't mean the AI recommends you. So the real question is: how do you get into that answer?

HOW YOU GET IN

Clean, structured data is the new shelf placement.

If the AI can’t read you, you’re not in the conversation.

Getting in is not magic. The AI recommends what it can read and trust. So your product information, your stock, your location, all of it has to be clean, structured, and consistent across the web. That is the new shelf placement. If the AI can't read you, you're not in the conversation. So what does that look like in practice?

01 · 02 MAKE YOUR PRODUCTS READABLE

Complete product data, in plain language.

AVAILABILITY

In stock right now

Size 52	1 left
Size 54	3 in stock
Size 56	2 in stock
Size 58	Sold out

Live, accurate stock — in-stock items with current prices rank higher in the answer.

PRODUCT

Endurance Road Bike

beginner · endurance · electronic

Best for	Beginner road, light gravel
Shifting	Electronic (Di2)
Size	56, fits ~1.82 m
Price	3,800 €

In stock: 2

Complete, structured data — every spec and size as proper fields, plus the plain-language use case. **Even more important — and where we go next.**

Two things here. The first is the housekeeping: keep your stock live and accurate. In-stock items with current prices rank higher, and the AI only sends people for what you can actually hand them. But the second one matters even more: complete, structured product data. Bikes are spec-driven, and AI recommends what it can fully read, so every spec, every size has to be proper fields, not hidden in the description text. Products with missing attributes simply get skipped.

Product data is the pain.
That's the opening.

manufacturer_export_final_v3.xlsx

ART-NR	MODELL	GR.	GRUPPE	PREIS	LAGER
BX-2231	Roadbike Carbon	54	105 Di2	3499	2
bx-2232	roadbike carbon	—	shimano		
2233	Gravel ALU	56		2799	
BX-2240		M	GRX	—	1
BX-2241	E-Trekking		Deore	2199	4

Half-filled. Inconsistent. Free-text.

AI

→

DOES THE CLEANUP

STRUCTURED PRODUCT · In stock

Roadbike Carbon — Shimano 105 Di2

TYPE
Road

SIZE
54 cm (M)

GROUPSET
Shimano 105 Di2 · electronic

PRICE
€3,499

"A fast, comfortable road bike for a beginner who wants to start training — electronic shifting, around €3,500."

Almost nobody does it well — so the shop that does stands out. And the same AI you want to show up in does the cleanup.

And I know what you're thinking. Product data in this industry is a nightmare. Half-filled Excel sheets from manufacturers, or specs you copy off a website. But that's exactly the opening. Almost nobody does it well, so the shop that does stands out in the answer. And here's the twist: this is where AI pays you back. It can take that messy manufacturer data and structure it for you. The same AI you want to show up in can do the cleanup.

03 · 04 MAKE YOUR SHOP FINDABLE

One consistent story, everywhere it looks.

YOUR SHOP

Velohaus Frankfurt

Address	Mainkai 12, Frankfurt
Hours	Mon to Sat, 10 to 19
Services	Fitting, service, test rides

Open now

A complete, current local profile — hours, address, fittings and service.

EVERYWHERE

The same answer

- **Your website** — Endurance Road Bike · 3,800 €
- **Google profile** — Endurance Road Bike · 3,800 €
- **Maps listing** — Endurance Road Bike · 3,800 €

The same information everywhere — consistency reads as reliability.

Third, your local profile. Right opening hours, your address, and the fact that you do fittings and service. If that's outdated or thin, the AI skips you for the shop that looks alive. Fourth, the same information everywhere it looks. If your website says one thing, Google says another, and a directory says a third, the model trusts you less. One consistent story across your site, your Google profile, and your listings. These are just a few simple steps, but they already get you a long way.

SHIFT TWO — ON YOUR FLOOR

Peak season.
Full shop.
Not enough hands.

You won the recommendation. Now don’t lose them at the counter.

Now say you did all this. The AI recommends you, the customer walks in. Here's where you can still lose them. Saturday, peak season. Full shop, not enough hands. Your experts are advising, but half the job is lookup. Is it in stock. Which size. Are these compatible. Configuring a build. While they dig for the answer, the next customer waits. Or leaves. You can't hire your way out of that. But you can do something else.

GIVE THEM THEIR TIME BACK

More deals closed. Same team.

AI takes the lookup away. Your experts do what only they can — advise and close.

AI takes the lookup off their plate. It turns what the customer says into what fits and what's in stock, in seconds. Your experts spend their time on the part only they can do, advising and closing, and they reach more customers per shift. Better advice with a thin team. New hires who advise from day one. Not more headcount. More deals closed with the team you already have. So, two shifts. One before the visit, one on your floor.

Path to AI.

Don’t automate the conversation.
Be in the recommendation — and close it in store.

Yves Schleich — Path to AI

AI enablement for retail & e-commerce · 20+ years in e-commerce

/in/yves-schleich

path-to-ai.com

AI doesn't replace your salesperson. It gets your shop into the conversation that now happens before the visit, and it makes your floor the place where the deal closes. So: don't automate the conversation. Be in the recommendation, and close it in store. Thank you.